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Arab states given pleas by Reagan for accord

ALGIERS (UPI) — U.S. presidential envoy Vernon Walters is touring North Africa this week seeking Arab support for the Israeli-Lebanese troop withdrawal accord, Western diplomats said yesterday.

Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid received a message yesterday from President Reagan conveyed by Walters, the state-run Algerian news agency said.

Walters, deputy director of the CIA under the Carter administration, delivered a similar letter from Reagan to Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba Monday and left Algeria yesterday to take another letter to Morocco for King Hassan II, Western diplomats in Algiers said.

In Damascus, Syria, the state-run SANA news agency said President Hafez Assad received a message from Saudi King Fahd, apparently dealing with the Lebanese-Israeli agreement, signed last week.

SANA did not report the contents of the message, but Syrian sources indicated that Saudi Arabia is trying to soften Syria's rejection of the agreement.

U.S. envoy Philip Habib met with Fahd last week asking for help from the Saudis, the chief financial backers of Damascus, in arranging a Syrian pull-out.

However, one Arab diplomat in Damascus said the Saudis were not unsympathetic to the Syrian position. He said Saudi Arabia and the other Arab oil states along the Persian Gulf "have reservations concerning some clauses of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement." He added that he doubted Saudi Arabia would put strong pressure on the Syrians.

The privately owned Central News Agency in Beirut said the Saudis are trying to arrange a "mini-Arab summit," attended by Syria, Algeria, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Kuwait, Tunisia, the Arab League secretariat and Lebanon, to resolve the Syrian and Palestinian presence in Lebanon.

Lebanese officials reported that their government was thinking about asking the United Nations to help it put an end to the warfare between Christian and Druse militias in the central mountains southeast of Beirut if the Israelis withdraw their occupation forces there to southern Lebanon.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Elie Salem called a meeting in Beirut for today of the diplomatic representatives of the 10 nations that contribute troops to the 5,900-man U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Lebanese officials said Salem wanted to discuss getting the Security Council to authorize the peacekeeping force's deployment outside its present zone of operations in southern Lebanon.